

Onofre Nuclear Generating Station, the Padres Ballpark, the Olivenhein Dam and the Otay Mesa Generating Facility. She was also the Chairman of the Board of the National City Parks Apartments; a 150-unit non-profit apartment community for low-income residents built owned and operated by the Building Trades. In addition, Xema was elected 2nd Vice President of the San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council and served on its Executive Board from 2000 to January 2003.

In December 2002, Xema was appointed by Governor Gray Davis to serve a four-year term as a member of the Executive Committee for the San Diego County Regional Airport Authority. The newly created Airport Authority oversees the operations of the San Diego International Airport. The Executive Committee is charged with hiring key Airport Authority personnel and, along with the full Board, recommending an airport site to County voters.

Xema has been active in Democratic politics, serving as Assemblyman and Senator Steve Peace's appointee to the State Democratic Party from 1990 to 2000. She also served one term on the State Democratic Party Executive Board, working on the party platform committee.

In her community, she serves on the Board of Directors of the United Way of San Diego, the Holiday Bowl Committee, and is a member of the Stan Foster Construction Tech Academy at Kearny High School Advisory Committee. She has previously served as President of the Board of the San Diego Food Bank and as the first woman President of the Kiwanis Club of Chula Vista.

Xema makes her home in Casa de Oro in eastern San Diego County with her husband, Johnny Simpson and their children, Alexandra and Cody.

Xema Jacobson exemplifies the high values, standards, and principles of the late John S. Lyons. I offer my congratulations to her on her recognition as the 2003 "Labor Leader of the Year Award."

HONORING TOM BAKER OF  
BASALT, CO

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2003*

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the distinguished service of Mr. Tom Baker, the Town Manager of Basalt, CO. Mr. Baker is the recipient of the University of Colorado's Leo. C. Riethmayer award for the "outstanding public administrator of 2003".

Mr. Baker has proven his dedication to the Roaring Fork Valley since 1983, having held a variety of local government positions during his residency. In particular his tenure as Town Manager has provided him with the authority to restructure Basalt's local government process by downplaying the role of elected officials in the town's decisionmaking processes, which has successfully promoted increased citizen involvement.

Specifically, Mr. Baker has created citizen committees, in which ten percent of Basalt's residents participate, to ensure broad constituent involvement in the decisions of the town government. The utilization of these

committees has enabled the town to avoid failures that are often associated with uninformed policy decisions. The dedication, vision, and selflessness with which Mr. Baker has pursued his work deserves our most sincere thanks. Thus, I ask that my colleagues join with me in thanking Tom Baker for his service and many contributions to his community. He is much appreciated.

For further information on our colleague, I am attaching a copy of a recent story about Mr. Baker that appeared in The Aspen Times newspaper on July 25, 2003.

BAKER NAMED "OUTSTANDING" TOWN  
MANAGER

(By Scott Condon)

Basalt Town Manager Tom Baker has received a top honor in Colorado as the "outstanding public administrator of 2003."

The Colorado Chapter of Pi Alpha Alpha and the Graduate School of Public Affairs at the University of Colorado, Denver, selected Baker as the winner of the Leo C. Riethmayer award. It is given annually in Riethmayer's memory as the founding father of public affairs studies at CU.

While Baker was honored to receive the recognition, he was characteristically humble about his role in earning it.

"To be singled out for recognition is almost uncomfortable," he said. "The whole community is really being acknowledged."

Baker was a finalist for the award last year, when his nomination was coordinated by Basalt Town Councilwoman Jacque Whitsitt. The selection committee contacted Basalt Mayor Rick Stevens this year and urged him to re-nominate Baker because he was such a strong candidate.

Baker has drawn accolades for helping create a "horizontal, informal" type of governing in Basalt that downplays the role of the elected officials as decisionmakers and promotes citizen involvement.

Town officials estimated 10 percent of Basalt residents, roughly 220 people, are working directly with the town government on one of many citizen committees. There are currently 14 citizen committees working on issues ranging from the water rate structure, to how property along the Roaring Fork and Fryingpan rivers should be developed.

The idea of drawing so much community participation is to empower individuals in the decisionmaking process, Baker said. It is meant to avoid the "us versus them" trap politics often falls into when a handful of elected officials make decisions in a vacuum.

Baker was hired as the town manager in late 1998, and from the start he nurtured the idea of the town building "social capital." Instead of just reviewing land-use applications, the Town Council and town staff work to strengthen civic organizations and causes, both permanent and ad hoc.

Baker received his Bachelor of Science degree in City and Regional Planning from the Illinois Institute of Technology, and his Master of Public Administration from CU Denver.

He has been a resident of the Roaring Fork Valley since 1983 and has held a variety of local government positions, including Aspen Assistant City Manager, Executive Director of the Aspen/Pitkin County Housing Authority, and Assistant Planning Director for Aspen and Pitkin County. He received the Leadership Aspen Alumni Award in 2001 and serves on The Aspen Institute's Community Forum Board. He is an accomplished facilitator and serves as an advisor to the Institute of Social Ecology and Public Policy at Monterey, California.

The official presentation and celebration of the Riethmayer Award will

take place on Tuesday, August 12, in Basalt. This event usually happens on the Front Range, but this year the Pi Alpha Alpha Colorado chapter board members will come to Basalt to honor Baker in his hometown.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 2003*

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month, which runs through October 15, 2003. In our district across Northern Ohio, the community has organized events to honor our fellow citizens with Hispanic heritage. In our communities, Hispanic citizens have long made lasting contributions to all aspects of civic life, including business, education, religion, labor, and politics.

Ohio's ninth district Hispanic community is comprised of a large and vibrant Mexican American community, a spirited Puerto Rican community and many other countries in Central and South America and the Caribbean whose ancestry is represented. We celebrate many important holidays such as Dia de los Muertos and Puerto Rico's Independence, musical and artistic celebrations such as LatinoFest and support the existence of organizations such as Latinos United, Club Taino and many others.

Congress first resolved the celebration of Hispanic heritage through Public Law 90-498 in 1968. At that time the President was asked to issue annually a proclamation designating the week including September 15-16 as National Hispanic Heritage Week and calling upon the people of the United States, especially the educational community, to observe the week with appropriate ceremonies.

It was not until 1988, however, that the Congress drafted and approved a joint resolution to approve a month-long commemoration.

Hispanic Heritage Month affords us a special opportunity to celebrate the contributions of Hispanic Americans, now 38 million strong and the nation's largest minority group. It gives us the opportunity to thank them for enriching the quality of life in America. It gives us the opportunity to learn more about Hispanic Americans and their lives in America. It gives us an opportunity to pause and take note that no fewer than 40 Hispanic Americans have been awarded the Medal of Honor, our nation's highest honor for valor in action. It gives us an opportunity to reflect on the commitment to social justice exemplified by such leaders as Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta. It gives us an opportunity to resolve to fulfill the dream of "si se puede" of eradicating poverty and injustice and ensuring that all Hispanic Americans enjoy a full stakehold in American society of the 21st Century.

So, during this Hispanic Heritage Week, while we celebrate so many extraordinary achievements, we are also mindful of the challenges ahead and the bright future for Hispanic Americans in our changing American culture.